Security Council

The situation in the Korean peninsula

Kaan Özdemir & Kardelen Hiçdönmez

Alman Lisesi Model United Nations 2018
Introduction

The nuclear programme of North Korea and rising political tension in the Korean Peninsula have drawn international attention for sixty years now. The peninsula has been considered as a hotspot, a place of social and economic instability since the World War II. The fact that Korea remains to be the only divided nation-state in the world poses a major threat to the global security.

The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) is currently being ruled by a totalitarian regime and embraces the socialist ideology, which leads the country to a desperate position of self-isolation. The current solitariness of North Korea has its roots in the painful history of the nation, which genuinely began after the collapse of the USSR. With the failure of Soviet Union, communism vanished, and the United States of America gained significant power.

As a result of definitive breaking points, such as Korea claiming its sovereignty after years of Japanese occupation and Second World War the Korean Peninsula was gradually separated into the United States aligned South Korea with the official name of the Republic of Korea and Soviet-allied North Korea with the official name of Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. Following the Cold War, South Korea began to develop even closer ties to a democratic ideology alongside the United States of America. The country encouraged open society and showed tremendous endeavors in flourishing free market. While South Korea transitioned from dictatorship to democracy, North Korea chose to remain the same statement cannot be made for North Korea.

North Korea has grown massive mistrust against the Western countries and due to the background as mentioned above history; they invest a considerable amount of money into their military. The people of the country are not satisfied, enduring the below-average living standards. Despite the discontent of the citizens, North Korea insists on maintaining an active nuclear weapons programme and having a budget, a constant money influx that cannot be underestimated.

The situation in North Korea remains to be one of the most critical geopolitical disputes in the past century. The previous attempts to put an end to the question of North Korea’s nuclear programme must be considered in order tackle the issue with a solution-orientated diplomatic approach.

Definition of Key Terms

Human rights

Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, whatever our nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, language, or any other status. We are all equally entitled to our human rights without discrimination. These rights are all interrelated, interdependent and indivisible. Human rights are adopted and proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly resolution 217 A (III) of 10 December 1948.
The situation in the Korean peninsula

**Famine**

A famine is a situation in which a large number of people have little or no food for a long time, and many people die. In the mid-1990s, one of the most catastrophic events of modern North Korean history took place— the Great Famine. It's believed the famine, also referred to as the Arduous March, killed up to 3.5 million people between 1994 and 1998. Many of those who died were children.

**Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)**

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is the most significant international treaty that was drafted in 1965 and put into place in 1970. The Treaty was indefinitely extended on 11th of May 1995. The convention aims to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, their technology, and the materials needed to create them. To promote cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy, for medical and energy usage is also among its intentions.

**Six-party talks**

Six-party talks are a series of meetings consisting of 6 rounds that took place in Beijing between 2003 and 2007 to come up with a solution to the security concerns on North Korea’s nuclear weapons programme. The six participating member states were as follows: North Korea, South Korea, Japan, United States of America, China and Russia.

**Intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM)**

An intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) is a guided ballistic missile with a minimum range of 5,500 kilometers primarily designed for nuclear weapons delivery.

**General Overview**

North Korea’s nuclear ambitions have been a point of interest in the eyes of United Nations since the foundation of the country. Although they ratified the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) back in 1985, however after The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) had passed a resolution demanding an inspection of DPRK’s nuclear programme, DPRK initially showed signs of a possible withdrawal of the NPT. A suspicious air surrounded DPRK due to its mysterious activities. Bearing in mind that IAEA’s call for an investigation of the two nuclear waste storage sites located in North Korea received a very aggressive response from the country such as threatening to quit the treaty, North Korea and the United States of America ended up reaching to an agreement and signing the
The situation in the Korean peninsula

"1994 Agreed Framework", in which they shake hands on the arrangement that North Korea would freeze and eventually dismantle its nuclear program if international assistance is provided for the construction of two modern light-water nuclear reactors. It seemed like the position and ratification of North Korea was secured by this agreement. However, it didn’t turn out to be as planned.

In the following nine years, IAEA Chairman Hans Blix kept expressing his doubt about DPRK. In the first place, he showed a displeased attitude towards the agreement between DPRK and USA, since he believed that it gave way too much time to act accordingly and comply with the inspections regime. He was proved right by DPRK. The country still didn’t make a final clarification on its nuclear programme by publicly declaring the amount of plutonium they possess two years after the agreement. He warned the IAEA Board that the country could be producing weapons using its plutonium without IAEA being able to verify it.

Things began to get heated up when DPRK declared its withdrawal from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in January 2003, after the U.S. Bush administration labelled North Korea alongside Iran and Iraq as "axis of evil" in January 2002, due to the selfish agendas of these countries, which threaten the international security. "By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger," were his exact words. Just before DPRK’s exit from the NPT, in October 2002, USA revealed intelligence indicating that North Korea violated the agreement between the two nations by secretly conducting a nuclear weapons program. The official statement from North Korea admitting that it has nuclear power was made in April 2003.

The first nuclear missile test was carried out in 2006 and was considered as a successful action by DPRK. This incident of the launch of six nuclear missiles caused the United Nations to impose sanctions on North Korea. Despite international condemnation, North Korea test-fired a seventh missile the day after and announces plans on continuing with the missile launches.

In 2007, things began to proceed in a positive direction, when DPRK accepted to shut its main nuclear facility down in exchange for international aid of 400 million US dollars. This was followed by an agreement that was signed at six-party-talks in Beijing saying that North Korea would remove all of its nuclear reactors. Not surprisingly, North Korea didn’t keep its promise and failed to meet the deadline by the end of the year.

North Korea was regarded as a country showing good intention when they destroyed a water-cooling tower of the Yongbyon nuclear place. Subsequently, The United States of America deleted DPRK from their list of countries sponsoring terrorism. Just two months later, the six-party-talks were interrupted as North Korea did not allow IAEA access to its nuclear facilities once again. Then the next year, North Korea executed a second nuclear activity by testing nuclear missiles. The history repeated itself and United Nations Security Council strongly condemned the latest North Korean nuclear interests and charged new and stricter sanctions.
The situation in the Korean peninsula

This cycle was repeated over and over again, until today. The only difference is that world superpowers are starting to run out of tolerance and patience, whereas the actions of DPRK keeps posing even more serious threat to the global security.

In 2013, the third nuclear missile test was conducted, and additional UN sanctions were implemented in protest. This time DPRK pushed the limits of its capacities and developed a hydrogen bomb.

Major Parties Involved

Democratic People’s Republic of Korea

The current North Korean political leader is Kim Jong-un. The first leader of the country was Kim Il Jong-un, who was in fact chosen by the Soviet authorities during the Soviet occupation of the Northern region of Korea. Since then, a family dynasty has been ruling the country. The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea has a dangerous nuclear program. Nuclear missile tests are regularly being carried out despite the international condemn and law.

The Republic of Korea

After the division of Korean Peninsula through the 38th parallel, the Northern territory was affected by the Soviet communist ideology, and the Southern part was influenced by the United States capitalist and democratic regime. So, in other words, after the Korean War, not just a physical separation took place, but also an ideological division was observed. The Republic of Korea hasn’t had a very friendly stance towards its neighbour in the north after the 1953 ceasefire, as expected. The tension between the two nations remains untackled, which leads them to a position, where perhaps they will never succeed in getting united due to many historical reasons. South Korea remains a crucial ally for the US to stop the crisis diplomatically.

United States of America

As a superpower, USA has had a close watch of the Korean Peninsula throughout the history. American government backed South Korea up during the Korean War. United States have maintained their strict policy against the nuclear plans of North Korea and have been one of the main opponents of DPRK. With the elections in 2016, and Donald Trump being elected as the president, the international relations between these two countries have worsened. Donald Trump chose to follow a less passive policy against DPRK’s nuclear threat.

Russian Federation
Russian Federation has taken an active role in the crisis in the Korean Peninsula since the beginning by siding with North Korea as a reliable ally to eliminate any threats against its plans and future projects for the peninsula. Surely, Russia has economic interests in the region, which can only be seized through diplomatic stability. That is why current Russian leader Vladimir Putin wanted to participate in talks aiming to ease further tension.

**IAEA**

International Atomic Energy Agency is the non-governmental organization officially responsible for the international nuclear arsenal. According to the NPT, IAEA has the authority to investigate the nuclear schedule through monitoring activities. Despite the fact that North Korea supported NPT at first, it has repeatedly rejected such involvement of IAEA into their nuclear program, which is categorized as internal affairs and they see it righteous to conduct further atomic missile tests to make room for improvement, even if IAEA doesn’t grant permission. Eventually, DPRK announced a non-signatory state for the NPT.

**Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue**

United Nations Security Council have passed 28 resolutions in total. 6 of these are about the Korean War, one is related to the UN membership issue, and the rest 21 are related to the denuclearization of DPRK.

Resolutions S/RES/82, S/RES/83, S/RES/84, S/RES/85 and S/RES/90 aimed to conclude the Korean War by providing aid and assistance to South Korea. UN Security Council condemned North Korea’s involvement in South Korea and demanded the withdrawal of the North Korean armed troops. UNSC stated that the “invasion” of South Korea in the war constituted an “unlawful attack.” Resolution S/RES/702 recommended both South Korea and North Korea for UN membership so that both countries have the opportunity to represent their people on an international basis.

Other 21 resolutions between the dates 11th May 1993 and 21st March 2018 focused on the non-proliferation of DPRK. S/RES/825, the first resolution after the withdrawal of North Korea from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), urged the country to reconsider its decision and abide by its international obligations. As another example of the content of a UNSC resolution, S/RES/1695 condemned North Korea’s first launch of ballistic missiles in 2006 and applied sanctions. S/RES/2087 further condemned the nuclear missile tests in 2013 and extended the sanctions. In resolution S/RES/2397, the UN Security Council unanimously strengthened imposed sanctions as a response to the launch of the Hwasong-15 intercontinental ballistic missile. The United Nations Security Council issued a statement declaring, “The Security Council urges the DPRK not to undertake such a test and to refrain from any action that might aggravate tension, to work on the resolution of non-proliferation concerns and to facilitate a peaceful and comprehensive solution through
The situation in the Korean peninsula political and diplomatic efforts. Later in the day, there are unconfirmed reports of the North Korean government successfully testing a nuclear bomb.”

During all these occasions, the situation was constantly discussed in the six-party talks. The world wanted to believe that this issue could be resolved with the power of diplomacy, but they were apparently mistaken.

Bibliography

http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Pages/WhatAreHumanRights.aspx
http://www.wiki-zero.com/index.php?q=aHR0cHM6Ly9ib3JkMy5jeGtlbnkub3JnL3dpdC90cmFuc2ZvcmQvdGhlY2htbC9vZmMyL3VucmVhcGhhbmcu
https://www.indexmundi.com/factbook/compare/south-korea.north-korea
http://www.wiki-zero.com/index.php?q=aHR0cHM6Ly9ib3JkMy5jeGtlbnkub3JnL3dpdC90cmFuc2ZvcmQvdGhlY2htbC9vZmMyL3VucmVhcGhhbmcu
http://www.wiki-zero.com/index.php?q=aHR0cHM6Ly9ib3JkMy5jeGtlbnkub3JnL3dpdC90cmFuc2ZvcmQvdGhlY2htbC9vZmMyL3VucmVhcGhhbmcu
http://www.wiki-zero.com/index.php?q=aHR0cHM6Ly9ib3JkMy5jeGtlbnkub3JnL3dpdC90cmFuc2ZvcmQvdGhlY2htbC9vZmMyL3VucmVhcGhhbmcu